



NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

GETTING STARTED WITH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Often the most difficult part of increasing physical activity is getting started. It can be difficult for Australians to be physically active due to increasing work and family commitments. However the National Physical Activity Guidelines encourage individuals to look for opportunities to be active during their daily lives, so that physical activity need not be a time-wasting inconvenience.

By following the Guidelines published by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, many health benefits can be gained.

Make physical activity part of your lifestyle

The following points will help you to make a physical activity program a regular part of your lifestyle:

- Choose a time to be active that suits you best;
- Try different things until you find an activity you enjoy;
- Set realistic short-term goals to work towards and reward yourself when you achieve them;
- Wearing a pedometer to measure your steps can help you achieve your goals;
- Be safe: warm-up, cool-down, drink lots of water and remember to stretch afterwards;
- Aim for moderate-intensity – make sure you can breathe comfortably while exercising;
- When something breaks your routine: try to treat the set back as temporary and get back on track as soon as you can. Don't give up;
- Track your progress on a chart to help you achieve your goals;
- Walk with a group for social enjoyment and motivation;
- Join a sport, recreation or fitness club to make new friends and stay committed.

Walking – An excellent starting point

More Australians participate in walking each week than any other physical activity. Walking is a readily available activity for most Australians; it requires little skill, does not need special equipment, is inexpensive and enjoyable. Walking is also a great social activity and can be enjoyed with friends or alone.

People can get health benefits even from small increases in walking, such as around the local neighbourhood for recreation or to the bus stop or work each day.

The Guidelines recommend 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most days, however this does not need to be continuous. This time can be made up by performing several activities in 10 minute blocks over the day.

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing recommends that people take 10,000 steps each day (which is equivalent to an additional 30-60 minutes per day of moderate-intensity walking on top of normal daily activities) to meet the recommended level of physical activity for health. A pedometer can be useful to keep track of this.

Sporting, recreation or fitness clubs in your area

Call your local Department of Sport and Recreation, fitness industry association or local council for details of clubs in your area, on the numbers listed below:

ACT	(02) 6207 2111	NSW	13 13 02
NT	1800 045 678	QLD	(07) 4237 9830
SA	(08) 8416 6677	TAS	(03) 6233 5627
VIC	(03) 9666 4376	WA	(08) 9387 9700

For more information about Physical Activity and Health and to obtain a copy of the National Physical Activity Guidelines, please visit the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing's Nutrition and Physical Activity website at: <http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/active/index.htm>

For more information about Walk to Work Day, please visit the Walk to Work Day website at: www.walk.com.au

